

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SOFIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 232016

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM DAS DOWNEY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BEXP, OTRA, BU

SUBJECT: DOC VISITORS TO SOFIA (REF: SOFIA 1908, ET. AL.)

1. I HAVE NOTED YOUR CONCERN ABOUT BEHT VISITORS AND, WITH SPECIFIC REGARD TO DAVE BOWIE, HIS REQUESTED VISIT TO SOFIA HAS BEEN CANCELLED. I REGRET THE IMPRESSION GIVEN YOU THAT THE LAST CABLE WAS HIGHLY ARGUMENTATIVE. WE SHARE THE SAME GOAL WITH REGARD TO U.S.-BULGARIAN TRADE RELATIONS AND CERTAINLY HOPE MISUNDERSTANDINGS ARE NOT DEVELOPING AS A RESULT OF MY EFFORTS TO DEVELOP MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE AND EFFECTIVE HUMAN RESOURCES WITHIN THIS BUREAU. I HAVE PERCEIVED A NEED TO HAVE OUR POLICY LEVEL STAFF, AS WELL AS CERTAIN INDUSTRY AND TRADE PROMOTION SPECIALISTS, DEVELOP FIRST-HAND KNOWLEDGE OF BULGARIA THTHOUGH PERSONAL VISITS. IT IS THROUGH SUCH PERSONAL SHARING OF VIEWS AND INFORMATION, BOTH AT THE POLICY AND SPECIALIST LEVELS, THAT WE HOPED TO BUILD THE KIND OF MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND CONFIDENCE THAT IS NECESSARY FOR TRADE TO EXPAND.

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2. I REALIZE THAT VISITORS PUT A STRAIN OH EMBASSY

RESOURCES AND THAT IN THE BULGARIAN CONTEXT THERE MAY BE
A DEGREE OF REPETITIVENESS IN THE EYES OF THE HOST
OFFICIALS. IN THIS SETTING, I CAN UNDERSTAND YOUR

DISAPPOINTMENT THAT OUR VISITS DO NOT ALWAYS ADD
APPRECIABLE ASSISTANCE TO THE EMBASSY. I HOPE, HOWEVER,
THAT YOU AND THE GOB OFFICIALS WOULD VIEW THESE CALLS AS
A VALUABLE EXPERIENCE AND SUBSTANTIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE
EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INDIVIDUALS WHICH IN THE LONGER TERM
WILL BE TRANSLATED INTO A MORE EFFECTIVE WASHINGTON TEAM.

3. DAVE BOWIE'S VISIT FELL IN THE CATEGORY OF INDUSTRY
SPECIALISTS. HE IS ONE OF OUR TWO EXPERTS ADVISING U.S.
BUSINESSMEN IN THE AREAS OF AVIATION, ELECTRONIC
COMPONENTS, ELECTRONIC PRODUCTION EQUIPMENT, COMPUTERS,
INSTRUMENTATION AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS. AS YOU CAN SEE
BOWIE'S SCOPE REACHES TO AREAS THAT BULGARIA SEEMS TO HAVE
BEEN ALLOCATED IM THE CEMA SCHEME. AS BOWIE HAS NOT
VISITED BULGARIA IT WAS OUR PERCEPTION THE VISIT
WOULD HAVE MATERIALLY ENHANCED HIS EFFECTIVENESS.

4. WE WILL CERTAINLY GIVE YOUR CONCERNS FULL
CONSIDERATION IN PLANNING FUTURE TRAVEL TO BULGARIA AND
MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ENSURE THAT EACH VISIT IS PRODUCTIVE.
I APPRECIATED YOUR PERSONAL MESSAGE, WHICH IS NEVER A
BURDEN BUT WHICH BRINGS TO MY ATTENTION SITUATIONS I AM
NOT ALWAYS COGNIZANT OF IN ADVANCE. DOWNEY. ROBINSON

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